

Waltham Police Department

FIRST RESPONDER BARRICADED PERSONS HOSTAGE SITUATIONS CHAPTER 57

General Order Number: GO-01

Effective Date: 01/2009

POLICY:

The first fifteen to forty-five minutes of a hostage barricaded person situation (excluding a rescue attempt) are the most dangerous. The actions taken by the first responding officer may affect the eventual outcome of the incident. Safety and control must always be the prime consideration in the decision making process. Disciplined communication, coordination, and control, are paramount to a successful resolution. This is truly a team effort incident. Normally there is NO NEED TO RUSH to a tactical solution. Studies show they can resolve most of these incidents through negotiations. The passage of time may reduce levels of stress, facilitate intelligence gathering, and foster sound communications and coordination. It is the policy of the Waltham Police Department to use the following tested guidelines in response to a hostage barricaded person incident.

PROCEDURES:

1. CONSIDERATIONS:

- A.** The primary goals of the first responding officers should be:
 - 1.** The safe release of the hostages/barricaded person
 - 2.** Public Safety
 - 3.** Officer Safety
- B.** The first tactical considerations are officer safety, care and evacuation of the injured. Next is containment of the suspect. Officers should establish inner and outer perimeters of safety. Once the situation is confirmed, the Officer In Charge should notify the Division Commander. He should next immediately request hostage negotiators, available tactical teams and any outside assistance deemed necessary. Officers located in the inner perimeter should maintain a position of cover. Efforts should be directed to contain and to negotiate.

- C.** Fire suppression equipment, ambulance service, and surveillance equipment should be requested and directed to a staging area. The staging area should be located near the scene and out of view of the suspect. Additional assistance and the media should also be directed to this area. The use of blue lights and sirens should be discouraged.
- D.** When dealing firearms or explosives, consideration should be given to the evacuation of all innocent persons and bystanders from the inner and outer perimeter areas. All evacuations should be conducted in an organized, preplanned manner. Any innocent bystanders who cannot be immediately evacuated should be instructed to seek protection where they are.
- E.** Once containment is secured, a **SLOW DOWN** process should begin. Speed is usually not a factor. Time is on your side. Attempt to calm the suspect and talk him out of his barricaded position.
- F.** All attempts should be made to prevent the situation from becoming mobile. However if the situation does become mobile guidance should be taken from the Hostage Involved Vehicle Pursuit section of the Waltham Police Department Manual Chapter 41.
- G.** Maintain a low profile. Keep all marked police cars and uniforms out of sight of the suspect if possible. Do not overwhelm the suspect with an excessive show of force.
- H.** No law enforcement officer shall willingly become a captive or hostage of the suspect.
- I.** It will be the responsibility of the Commanding Officer - Platoon on duty to designate the on scene commander. The on scene commander shall be in command of all police operations and make all decisions regarding police action taken. He shall be the liaison between the tactical and negotiation teams and all assisting outside agencies. He shall have the final say relative to the use of force, chemical agents and tactical assault.
- J.** The on scene commander or his designee shall be authorized to address the media. All dealings with the press or television shall be in compliance with Waltham Police Department Public Information Policy Ch. 54-1.
- K.** If it becomes apparent that a timely resolution is not imminent, a forward command post should be considered. The forward command post is that location from which all organized and controlled police activities originate. It should be located inside the outer perimeter but outside the inner perimeter. It should be located near the staging area where arriving personnel can report and remain until given specific assignments. If a fixed structure is not available, a police cruiser or patrol wagon equipped with cellular telephone communication may suffice.
- L.** Use of a trained negotiator is preferred. However prior the arrival of a hostage

negotiator, or if one is not available, the first responding officers should attempt to begin a dialogue with the suspect. Communication should be established utilizing the best means possible. The following suggestions may help the first responding officers during negotiations:

1. Ask him to come out;
 2. Ask suspect why he is doing what he is doing;
 3. Make no suggestions;
 4. Keep suspect in a decision-making mode;
 5. Never negotiate weapons;
 6. Say you are working for him but you have to get higher approval;
 7. Never give him something without getting something;
 8. Stall for time;
 9. Gather as much intelligence about the suspect as possible.
- M.** First responding officers should not take aggressive action unless they have attempted all reasonable negotiations and there is immediate danger to others or themselves.
- N.** When an assault alternative is selected proper planning must be conducted. Sufficient personnel must be assigned, timing must be carefully chosen, and proper equipment must be utilized. The successful execution of an assault is a direct consequence of the attention given to its preparation.
- O.** The assigned officer will submit a report relative to his or her incident involvement. Copies of the report will be forwarded to the on scene commander. The on scene commander will review the submitted report and write an after action report. The after action report will be completed and submitted to the Division Commander for review. A debriefing meeting will be scheduled for all participants to discuss possible future operational improvements.
- P.** For use of Patrol Rifle, refer to Waltham Police Department Manual Chapter 51.